

*BEST COPY*

*AVAILABLE*

RAFT

Approved For Release 2001/08/14 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000800010014-3

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NOC BRIEFING

September 1956

### SOVIET INTERESTS IN ANTARCTICA

I. The \_\_\_\_\_ sq. mi. Antarctic continent, permanently ice-covered, barren and hostile, has been an area of limited interest to the world powers since its discovery in 1772.<sup>\*</sup> Exceptions to this general lack of interest include explorers, some scientists (particularly geologists, geophysicists, meteorologists and oceanographers), and the maritime nations ( notably \_\_\_\_\_ )

*\* Cook's circumnav.*

whose whaling fleets have cruised the forbidding Antarctic coast regularly since \_\_\_\_\_ ( in 1955, \_\_\_\_\_ factory ships and \_\_\_\_\_ catchers, ~~the coast of Antarctica~~ <sup>(OR # \_\_\_\_\_ WORTH OF)</sup> flying the flag of \_\_\_\_\_ nations, "harvested" \_\_\_\_\_ ~~tons of~~ whale in Antarctic waters).

A. Other exceptions to this lack of interest, whose motivations range from national pride, through geographic propinquity, to hard-handed geopolitics, include <sup>9</sup> ~~THE~~ **THE GOVERNMENTS OF :**

1. Argentina and Chile - - (insert motivation)
2. Australia and New Zealand - - (insert motivation)
- and France
3. The UK - - (insert motivation)

and;

4. The US and the USSR.

B. Soviet activity in the Antarctic dates from \_\_\_\_\_, and has included the following:

1. Historically, Russian interest in the area stems from the X (VON BELLINGSHAUSEN (1819-21) AT ALEXANDER I'S DIRECTION) exploratory voyages of \_\_\_\_\_ a period which put \_\_\_\_\_

Russian place-names on the Antarctic map.

2. Approved For Release 2001/08/14 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000800010014-3  
However, active Soviet exploration and settlement \_\_\_\_\_

Antarctica did not begin until last winter (the Antarctic "summer").

25X1A9a



II. This Soviet Antarctic push began with the arrival of the TRANSPORT 06 AND THE RESEARCH VESSEL LENA IN on 5 January 1956. Before the last of three such

Soviet vessels departed \_\_\_\_\_ on 18 March 1956, the USSR had delivered to the frozen continent 355 scientific and support personnel, 40 vehicles, six aircraft (ranging from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_) and over 8,000 tons of provisions, housing equipment and fuel.

A. TWO permanent bases were established, <sup>ONE</sup> at THE COAST, NAMED "MIRNY" AFTER ONE OF BELLINGHAUSEN'S SHIPS, AND THE OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ MILES INLAND, NAMED PIONERSKAYA (\_\_\_\_\_). with winterproof housing for \_\_\_\_\_ people and a total of \_\_\_\_\_ barracks, \_\_\_\_\_ laboratories, and \_\_\_\_\_ scientific installations.

1. When the last of the Soviet ships left MIRNY, 92 Soviet scientists, technicians and aides remained behind, to "winter over" until the arrival of the next supply expedition (due in \_\_\_\_\_, 1957).

B. A description of these permanent bases gives some measure of the USSR's wholehearted support of this Antarctic effort.

1. Mirny (translation) - - the main base - - is located at \_\_\_\_\_ (see map). It can accommodate 100. There are \_\_\_\_\_ barracks, three laboratories, five scientific \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_ of the USSR's six Antarctic aircraft are located there; as are \_\_\_\_\_ of the 40 vehicles. Its winter complement numbers \_\_\_\_\_. The work to be done at Mirny includes

2. Vostok (translation) - - to be the South Geomagnetic Station during the 1957-1958 International Geophysical Year (IGY) - - is located at \_\_\_\_\_. It can accommodate \_\_\_\_\_. There are \_\_\_\_\_ barracks, \_\_\_\_\_ laboratories and \_\_\_\_\_ scientific \_\_\_\_\_.  
**NOT YET ESTAB?**

3. Pionerskaya ("Pioneer"), an interior base, is located ~~nearly~~ <sup>2</sup>  
~~250 miles inland from Vestek~~, at an altitude of 9,000 ft. (map).

It was established by a combination of air-lift sledge-train  
and can accommodate \_\_\_\_\_. Its buildings include

and its winter complement numbers \_\_\_\_\_.

It boasts a \_\_\_\_\_ ft. airstrip. With the establishment of  
Pionerskaya, the USSR is able to claim the first interior  
scientific station in the history of the Antarctic.  
its

III. From ~~their~~ arrival in January 1956 to the present, the Soviet  
Antarctic expedition has accomplished the following work:

A. Air mapping:

B. Marine charting:

C. Ground reconnaissance and mapping:

D. Geophysics (including \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_):

E. Oceanography:

F. Meteorology:

IV. IN GETTING THIS WORK DONE, THE SOVIET EXPEDITION HAD ITS SHARE OF DIFFICULTIES:  
A, B, C, D, ETC.

*revised*  
(V) In the process, the Soviet expedition <sup>(HAD FLAUN.)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ miles, covered  
NONETHELESS, BY THE SEASON'S END,  
\_\_\_\_\_ miles on the ground, cruised \_\_\_\_\_ miles of seacoast and  
put Russian names to \_\_\_\_\_ Antarctic terrain features (as was made  
evident on the new maps of Antarctica they distributed with a lavish  
hand at the July 1956 Paris meeting of the IGY Antarctic Conference).

A. Motivated perhaps <sup>WITH</sup> as much by the canniness of practical geopoliticians <sup>(see)</sup>  
as by the zeal of explorers, the Soviet scientists also held four

ceremonial flag-raising, and deposited duplicate records in flag-marked cairns at two other points (map).

B. As a footnote to this, \_\_\_\_\_, Chairman of the Soviet Academy of Science's "Council on Antarctic Research", in March 1956, made it a point to emphasize:

1. Initial Russian discovery of Antarctica;
2. Antarctica's importance "in a strategic aspect";
3. Soviet "rejection" of the so-called "Sector" principle of various national claims to Antarctic territory; and
4. Soviet insistence on a voice in any international division of Antarctica.

IV. It is noteworthy that all the Soviet activity here detailed has taken place before the official start of the International Geophysical Year (1957-58). During the IGY, the USSR plans even more ambitious undertakings.

- and perhaps seven
- A. Six/permanent stations will be established (v. 3 in 1956);
  - B. Fifty or sixty "mobile" stations will be set up (v. 4 in 1956);
  - C. On-the-ground reconnaissance is envisioned, from coast to Pole, along a 1,000-mile stretch of coastline (from 70 to 105E; see map).

(insert D.)

D. Finally, some Soviet scientific detachments will remain in

Antarctica even after the close of the Geophysical Year (date —).

D. The scientific program (which, even in 1956, embraced a number of studies outside the scope of the IGY program) envisions research in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: activities which no other IGY participant in Antarctica will pursue.

dimensions of this  
VII. In view of this ambitious Soviet plunge into the Antarctic continent, the question of motivation arises.

The obvious motivation is economic: the USSR already has an active whaling fleet of \_\_\_\_\_ vessels, whose annual catch is valued at some \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

1. In 1956-57, \_\_\_\_\_ new vessels are to be added to this fleet, and \_\_\_\_\_ additional whalers are presently under construction.

2. One(?) report states that the USSR's <sup>NEW</sup> atom-powered ice-breaker, under construction since \_\_\_\_\_, will cruise Antarctica in 1957, possibly as part of the IGY program and possibly in conjunction with commercial whaling activities.

**Q. SUCH USE OF SOVIET ICE-BREAKERS WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF**

**THE SLOW OFF-SEASON, SINCE THEIR**

ice-breakers, whose primary mission is maintenance of the

Northern Sea Route during their annual \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ season of navigability.

B. A second motivation combines economic and geopolitical considerations, as follows. At present, despite a number of national claims to "sectors" of Antarctic territory (which the USSR opposes in principle), no nation actually has any idea of what it might possess -- in the way of ores and minerals of economic value -- if its "sector" claim was honored.

1. The USSR's heavy emphasis on geologic surveying by its IGY expeditions means that the Soviets have a good chance of knowing what, if anything, of economic value underlies the \_\_\_\_\_ ft. ice-cover in their area of activity.

2. Thus, any claims the USSR may make, in an eventual partition of Antarctica among the powers, are likely to be based on knowledge rather than speculation.

3. There are other fringe benefits which the USSR will derive from its expeditions: know-how on cold weather operations, testing of high-latitude surveying and navigation techniques, and the like. All of these will <sup>W</sup> be the USSR's means of exploitation of its own \_\_\_\_\_.

An effort far in excess of that required by the glaciological program of the IGY) has applicability outside the realm of pure science.

1. Taken in combination with similar research in progress in the Soviet Arctic, these findings are likely to provide Soviet Scientists with refinements in knowledge of the size and shape of the earth of a substantially higher order than those available to Western scientists.

2. Applicability of such refined data to the problem of long-range guided missile operations would, of course, give the USSR a substantial advantage in this field of warfare.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~